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The easy communication with the fair ground by way of junks on the lake make this fair a great centre for the sale of heavy and bulky goods. Coffin boards, brought from the walnut forests on the Chi Tsu Shan, the mountain on the east side of the lake, have a ready sale. The Min Chia, like the Chinese, are accustomed to buy the wood and have their coffins made up in readiness for their own death when they have reached a ripe age. This, which seems rather macabre to the European, is not so regarded in China. It is looked upon as a prudent measure of insurance, no more morbid than membership of a Burial Assurance Society would be in Europe. The Min Chia are at one with the Chinese in paying a great deal of attention and spending a lot of money on funerals, tombs, and the other apparatus of decease, and consequently the coffin trade uses only the best hard woods, walnut for choice.

Ta Li hard granite cut into millstones, or in slabs which can be joined up to make a water tank, is also brought to the Yu Tan Hui by the ship load, for there is no such suitable stone in the northern and eastern districts whence many of those attending the fair come. Grindstones from further south, and of course, white Ta Li marble tombstones also have a large sale. All these goods are brought by boat, and many of the visitors from the lake side villages and towns and from Ta Li itself come to this fair by boat. In the summer, when there may be rain, and the roads are still boggy it is far more comfortable to travel by the lake boats, protected from the rain if it comes by the mat cabin top, or from the sun by the shadow of the towering mat sail. On the day before the fair opens the surface of the lake is dotted with dozens of boats converging on Shang Kuan and the rocky shore by the Yu Tan Hui site, some deep laden with stone or coffin boards, others buried under a mass of tables and chairs, the movable properties of a restaurant or tea

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house, while on others merchants recline upon the heaped up packages and boxes which hold their goods.

In spite of the crowds and animation of the fair ground, merchants, as usual, complain that in recent years their business has not been good. The farmers, they say cannot afford to buy since opium cultivation was stopped, and now since the war with Japan began, the price of imported goods is still higher. In 1938 the merchants said that whereas the people would buy old stock, i.e. that purchased before the war and still sold at pre-war prices, there was practically no sale for new stock, purchased since the value of the Chinese dollar in relation to outside currencies dropped. It is indeed fairly obvious that most of the people came to see and be seen rather than to make more than one or two small purchases. The fair must always have been for the villagers as much a social as a commercial occasion. It offers to the women, and particularly to the girls, one of the few opportunities of seeing scenes of busy life, crowds of people, and of wearing their best clothes in public. This is clearly an important aspect of the matter to them, for at no other time or place is it possible to see so many Min Chia girls wearing their full costume, moving freely unattended through the crowds, making their own purchases, watching their friends or rivals do the same, modestly aware that their looks and costumes are being appraised by masculine eyes as well.

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of tea every few miles, and these teahouse resting places 491
are all on the old tracks, since the motor road winding about the hillsides passes through uninhabited forest country for many miles on end. The same difficulty occurs in regard to sleeping accommodation, for the foot passenger can at most do twenty-five miles in a day, and in some parts the motor road, making a long detour, does not touch any village for more than forty miles. For these reasons the foot passenger traffic can make no use of the new road either.

Where a public bus service exists it is only a small 494
number of wealthy people who can afford to use it. The fare to Hsia Kuan from K'un Ming was at first seventeen New Yunnan dollars, and then was raised to twenty-one. No poor man could afford this fare for a single journey, low though it is by European standards. A poor man, even a young student going up to K'un Ming to the Middle School, would find it much cheaper to walk the distance in thirteen days than to ride in the bus for three. By walking he would only have the small charges for food and lodging to pay, for he would take his scanty luggage on his back. The large numbers of men who go down to Burma for work in the winter months also always travel on foot, carrying their baggage on baskets and poles. For the poor man in Yunnan, Shanks' pony is and will long remain the only conveyance.

Unlike any other province in China, except neighbouring 505
Kwei Chou, Yunnan has no water communications of any importance. There are no navigable rivers in the province. Although it is crossed by four of the greatest rivers, the Yang Tze, West River, Mekong and Salween, not one of them can be navigated in Yunnan. Yet in spite of the isolation and distance from other navigable water, there is an active boat traffic on the great Yunnan Lakes, and on the most isolated of all, the Erh Hai at Ta Li, the boats are the biggest and best made of any in Yunnan. The Erh Hai

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505 is thirty miles in length, with a width varying from seven miles at the widest point, to about three miles at the narrowest. It is thus an excellent means of communication between the towns and villages on its shores, and there is regular traffic in goods and passengers between these places.

Ta Li itself is not on the shores of the lake, being about two miles from the nearest point where boats touch, the village of Shier Yu. There is a local belief that once the water of the lake came much further up on the plain than is now the case, and this seems to be confirmed by the existence of humped-back bridges across what are now small ditches, but which it is said were once waterways on which boats navigated. On the other hand, Hsia Kuan and Shang Kuan, the two fortress towns at either end of the lake, are built on the edge of the water, and Têng Ch'uan beyond the northern end of the lake, can be reached by smaller boats going up the Erh river estuary. There are also three or four large market villages on the eastern shore, of which the most important is Wa Shih. Heavy and bulky freight is frequently shipped at Hsia Kuan and carried up to Shang Kuan by boat, where it is taken on by mule to districts further north, as this saves mule hire for two stages. At the Yu Tan Hui fair, held near Shang Kuan, almost all the goods and many of the passengers arrive by boat, but this, of course, is an exceptional occasion. The greater part of the lake traffic is in perishable foodstuffs, which are consumed locally. Thus, all the fruit for the Ta Li and Hsia Kuan markets comes across the lake from Wa Shih and other villages on the eastern shore, which are only a day's journey from the orange groves in the Pin Ch'uan plain. On their return journey these boats take firewood, which is scarce on the dry eastern shore, and also cargoes of dressed granite building stone and marbles for tomb stones. Tiles for roofing, which are made near Hsia Kuan,

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are usually shipped to all the villages and towns around the lake. 505

This traffic is entirely in the hands of Min Chia boat people, for none of the boat owners are Yunnanese Chinese or Moslems. The fact is interesting, for it raises the problem of whence the Min Chia obtained a knowledge of boat building and navigation. The nearest places where large sailing boats are in use are the Irrawaddy at Bhamo, about three hundred miles from Ta Li, and the K'un Yang lake, near which stands K'un Ming, the provincial capital. This lake is two hundred and seventy miles from Ta Li, and the junks used there are in every way unlike those that ply on the Erh Hai at Ta Li. The Erh Hai boats, which have the 501 distinction of sailing on what is probably the highest 502 sheet of navigated water in the world (6,700ft.), are much larger than those on the K'un Yang lake, and many details of their construction suggest that they are the product of a long and independent development. The largest ships are fifty feet long, with a beam of six to eight feet, and are built of heavy walnut planks, pegged together without the use of nails, the joints being closed with lime and cement, not caulked. This method seems clumsy, but in fact they do not leak if well looked after. The boat is almost flat-bottomed, but is fitted with a very large rudder which, when in use, projects deeper than the bottom of the boat and serves as a keel to correct leeway. This rudder has to be taken up and shipped when the boat approaches shallow water.

The Min Chia count on the wind for propulsion, and such oars as exist are rudimentary and clumsy paddles only used for manoeuvring the large boats in calms where the water is too deep to use poles. Boats are fitted with a mast which is made of pine, and is often thirty feet long. The sail is made of rice straw mats, strengthened with bamboo lathes so that when lowered it folds on itself in concertina fashion. It is raised by hauling on a cowhide rope, which passes over

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alluvial slope at an elevation of 5,800 feet. On our arrival the whole village of Chang-ra was assembled in one house where a wedding was taking place. All were celebrating the occasion by getting drunk. From Chang-ra we descend to the Salween which flows swiftly, entering a deep and narrow gorge south of the village. A single rope-bridge spans the river here, used only in the summer, when, owing to the swift current, crossing by dug-out is impossible. Several dug-out canoes were on the bank but only two were serviceable. Seven Lu-tzu, all gloriously drunk, made up the crew; one canoe was large, the other small and as tipsy as the crew (PLATES 191, 192). They rowed up-stream into the center of the current and pounding the sides of the canoe with their long, narrow paddles, gave a few yells and allowed it to drift swiftly with the current, until at a signal they paddled it out again to the other side. Horses and mules must swim across at the side of a large canoe.

The Salween, called in Tibetan rGya-mo-rngol Chhu,[47] flows here in wide curves at an elevation of 5,800 feet. (Our word Salween is said to be derived from the Burmese name of the river, which is Than-lwen.)

Administrative post of Da-ra and Ch'ang-p'u-t'ung. — At the hamlet of Chang-thang ཇང་ཐང་ (Cho-ts'ung 卓從; Shu-lang of the Lu-tzu), on the west bank of the river opposite Chang-ra the trail leads north, high above the river, through buckwheat fields followed by dense woods, to the Tibetan village of Da-ra[48] with its many *mani* pyramids. The houses which are constructed of carved mud have carved window frames and slate roofs.

Beyond Da-ra the river makes a deep and sharp curve, giving the appearance of a tributary entering it, the bend being almost O-shaped. Ten li from Da-ra we strike first the hamlet of Bä-du and then the plain of Ch'ang-p'u-t'ung 昌蒲桶. The trail follows the mountain wall in a wide curve ere reaching the gentle, cultivated slopes (PLATE 193).

West of Ch'ang-p'u-t'ung, called Hra-mu-dam by the Lu-tzu, is a huge limestone cliff crowned by forest; here a large valley opens out which makes a bend southward, the stream flowing past the village into the Salween. In this deep valley back of Ch'ang-p'u-t'ung is a high, rocky mountain called Nan-sa-wo, presumably a Lu-tzu name, the slopes and summit of which are covered with myriads of loose, flat rocks; a trail leads up this valley to the Ch'iu Chiang, or eastern branch of the Irrawadi. To the north of the village a shorter stream cuts deeply into the alluvial plain or small plateau, thus isolating the little place with its monastery still in ruins since 1905. It was burned to the ground by Chinese soldiers, who were sent to avenge the murder of the Catholic priest and the destruction of the Bahang Mission. The

[47] རྒྱ་མོ་རྔོལ་ཆུ

[48] Da-ra is the seat of a Chinese official who holds the title of Hsing-cheng wei-yüan 行政委員 (Deputy administrator). The district received recently the name of Kung-shan 貢山 (Tribute mountains). The Chinese deputy magistrate in principle administers also the valley of the Ch'iu Chiang 秋江 which the Tibetans call Chhang-yul ཆང་ཡུལ (Land of beer). The names Chang-thang and Chang-ra are pronounced Chyong-tsong and Chyong-ra by the local people, hence the Chinese transcription.

[a Lu-tzu village -- Analyst]

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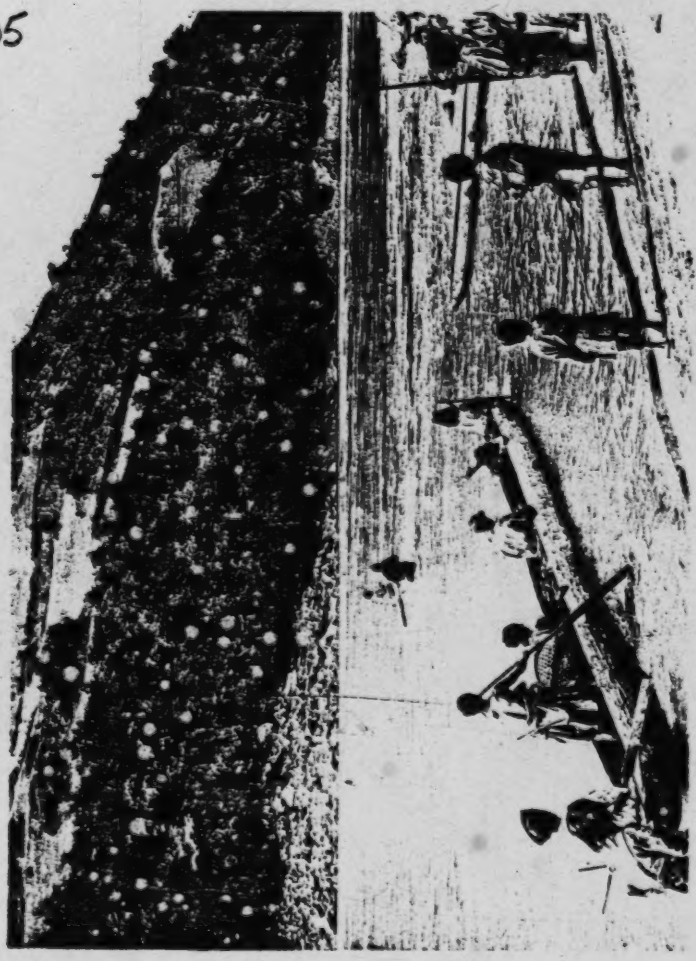

(Courtesy Nat. Geogr. Soc.)

PLATE 192.—THE SALWEEN AT CHANG-BA

怒江上之溜索

In the winter the crossing of the Salween is accomplished by dug-out canoes paddled by Lu-tzu; in the summer a single rope stretched across the river serves as a bridge. The Salween flows here at 5,800 feet.

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